



Baptist Health South Florida

BAPTIST HOSPITAL OF MIAMI • SOUTH MIAMI HOSPITAL • DOCTORS HOSPITAL
BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL • HOMESTEAD HOSPITAL • MARINERS HOSPITAL
BAPTIST OUTPATIENT SERVICES • BAPTIST CARDIAC & VASCULAR INSTITUTE

Taking part in your care: A guide to patient safety and well-being



A guide to patient safety and well-being

Being a patient means putting your trust in the care provided by doctors, nurses, technologists and others. At Baptist Health, we work hard to ensure that you feel safe and have confidence in the quality of our medical services. As a patient, you have a role to play in making your care safe by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your healthcare team.

This brochure is a guide to help you take charge of your care and participate in the decisions that affect your health and well-being. This information is helpful whether you are a patient staying in the hospital, visiting an emergency or urgent care center or going to an outpatient center or your doctor's office.

Baptist Health participates in the "Speak Up" program to prevent errors in patient care, sponsored by The Joint Commission (TJC). We were also a founding member of the National Patient Safety Foundation's "Stand Up for Patient Safety" program. Both programs urge patients to get involved and to speak up about any concerns or questions they may have. To help you remember how you can help make your healthcare experience as positive as possible, use this simple motto:

Always Remember to Be SAFE.

Safety first: Make sure you and your family know your allergies and medications.

Ask, ask, ask: Know all the who, what, when, where and why about the care and treatment you are to receive. Expect everyone involved in your care to introduce themselves by name, and to wear an identification badge. Make sure to tell your healthcare professional if you think he or she has you confused with another patient. Tell the nurse or doctor if you think you are about to receive the wrong medication or if something doesn't seem right. Don't assume anything.

Feel respected: You and your family have a right to be treated with respect, dignity and confidentiality. Never forget that your opinion matters.

Educate: Educate yourself and your family in partnership with your healthcare provider. Learn all you can about your illness and treatment options. Good sources include your doctor, your library, respected websites and support groups. Ask your doctor about the specialized training and experience that qualify him or her to treat your illness. Medical terminology can be confusing; make sure you understand the words used by your caregivers. And be sure to ask any questions you may have before signing any forms. Write down important facts your doctor tells you. Ask a trusted friend or family member to be your advocate.

Patient Safety Tips

Identification: While in the hospital, wear your wrist ID bracelet (provided to you on admission). This bracelet gives the staff information that is critical to your safety and verifies that you are the patient that they should be caring for. Make sure your nurse or doctor checks your wristband or asks



your name before he or she administers any medication or treatment.

Call lights: Your hospital bed and bathroom are equipped with call devices. Your nurse will show you how to use the call device. Always keep this device within your reach to call your nurse when you need help.

Smoke-free facility: To ensure everyone's safety, Baptist Health facilities are smoke-free. This means no smoking is allowed inside the building.

Preventing Infections

The staff takes measures to reduce the risk of patients developing an infection during the hospital stay. They include hand-washing, proper cleaning of equipment and sterile techniques. Hand-washing is important for everyone to practice, including patients, physicians and visitors. You and your loved ones should feel comfortable asking your caregivers, including your doctors, if they washed their hands before having direct contact with you. Most patient rooms have soap dispensers at the sink, as well as an alcohol-based hand rinse that cleans hands without water.



Preventing Falls

Some patients may be at risk for falling. If the staff believes you may be at risk, they will take steps to try to prevent a fall. One of the steps is putting a blue star outside the door to your hospital room to let the staff know you are at risk, or a red star if you already have had a fall. If sleeping medication is needed, it will be given early enough in the evening so that you will be less drowsy the next morning.

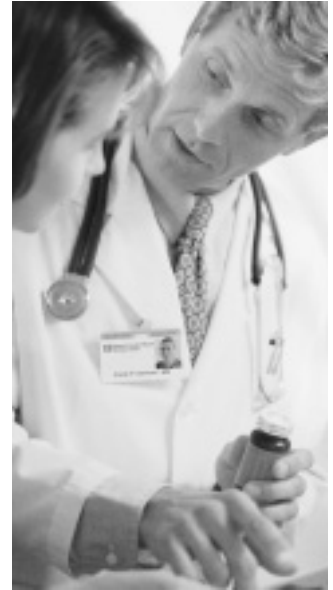
Here is what you and your loved ones can do to prevent a fall:

- Keep the telephone, call device and bedpan or urinal within your reach at the bedside. If walkers, canes or other assistive devices need to be kept close by, let the staff know.
- Remove clutter in the area where you will be walking. Send home any items that are not necessary. If equipment is in the way, tell the staff and it will be moved.
- Call for assistance when you need to go from the bed to the chair or bathroom. Move slowly. If oxygen or other equipment is in use, ask for assistance before getting out of bed.
- Let the staff know if you are going to be left alone in the room.

Medication Safety

Make sure to ask questions about your medications, such as what the medication does and the possible side effects. If you have any concerns about the medications, ask your nurse about them. Here are some tips for safe medication use:

- Report all medications you are taking. Include prescription drugs, birth control pills and hormones, as well as over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, antacids, laxatives, eye drops and cough medicine; and herbal supplements, vitamins, minerals, diet pills and dietary supplements.
- Let us know how you take these medications, such as with food or milk, or half a pill, especially if this is different from what was prescribed.
- Take all of your medications as prescribed.
- Keep a written record of your prescription medications, including the name, the dose and when you take it. Carry a copy in your purse or wallet. (Ask your nurse for a Health Passport from Baptist Health that lets you keep this record with you.) If you don't have the information, call someone at home who can read the labels on your medicine bottles, or call your doctor's office or pharmacy.
- When you go for a follow-up visit to your physician, take a record of the medications prescribed to you when you left the hospital.
- Call your primary care doctor if you have any problems with the medication.
- Speak up when you have any concerns or questions about your medication.
- Report any allergies or adverse reactions you are having or have had.
- While in the hospital, don't take medications from home, including vitamins, herbs or products such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil).



Invasive Lines and Tubes

Patients are sometimes confused because of illness, injury, unfamiliar settings, effects of medication or other reasons. This confusion may lead you to try to pull out intravenous (IV) lines or other tubes. For your safety and comfort, the nursing staff will:

- Work with the family to make you more comfortable.
- Assist with visits to the bathroom.
- Explain what is happening.
- Cover tubes and bandages.

Restraints are used only when other methods have failed and when necessary to prevent injury. These devices will be used only after consulting with a supervising nurse and physician. The family will be notified if restraints are necessary.

Surgery and Procedures

When coming for surgery or other procedures, be sure to ask questions before signing consent forms. You and/or your family will be asked to verify what type of surgery is planned for you. Mark the surgical site, which the doctor will do as well, so that there's no confusion in the operating room.

Patient Pain Tips

Managing your pain is an important part of treatment. Pain makes it hard for the body to heal. Also, pain interferes with your ability to participate in activities. You have a right to adequate pain management. Your opinion about how to manage your pain is important. In order for your nurses and doctors to help you control your pain, they should know the following information:

- Where your pain is located.
- Whether you have pain all the time or just some of the time.
- What it feels like.
- How bad it feels on a 0-10 scale (0 – no pain, 10 – worst possible pain).
- When the pain started.
- What makes you feel better and what makes you feel worse.
- What you think is the reason for your pain.
- What effect the pain has on your life (e.g., sleep, appetite, work).
- Anything else you think the nurses should know about your pain.

Although medications are frequently used to treat pain, there are other pain-reducing methods, such as massage, relaxation techniques and application of heat or cold. Check with your doctor, nurse, social worker, chaplain and/or physical therapist for suggestions that may help your pain.

In Closing

It's important that you participate in all decisions about your treatment and agree with what will be done during each step of your care. The more information you have, the more confident you will be in the decisions made.

While the physicians, healthcare executives, nurses, technicians and others at Baptist Health are focused on doing everything possible to make healthcare safety a priority, you are key to the success of these efforts. After all, research shows that patients who take part in decisions about their healthcare are more likely to have better outcomes.

For more information, call the Patient Safety Officer at these locations:

Baptist/Baptist Children's Hospitals	786-596-6526
Doctors Hospital	786-308-3181
Homestead Hospital	786-243-8546
Mariners Hospital	305-434-1623
South Miami Hospital	786-662-5018
Baptist Outpatient Services	786-596-4043



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